

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Final Office Action dated November 8, 2010, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12, and 14-19 are rejected to by the Examiner. With this response, claim 12 has been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-3, 5-10 and 14-17 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 12 and 18-19 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 6-10, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,403,616 to Hattori et al. (hereinafter “Hattori”) in combination with Japanese Patent Publication No. 08-031830 (hereinafter “830”) along or further in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,730,358 to Yamuni et al (hereinafter “Yamuni”) or in combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,704,002 to Kikuchi et al. (hereinafter “Kikuchi”). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with ‘830’ along or further in combination with Yamuni either or Kikuchi and still further in combination with Applicant’s admitted state of the art. Claims 14-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with ‘830’ alone or Kikuchi further in combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,301,191 to Peek (hereinafter “peek”).

The rejection of claims 1-3, 6-10, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with ‘830’ along or further in combination with Yamuni is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Since the rejected claims 1-3, 6-10 are cancelled, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 and 6-10.

Claim 12 is allowable at least in that this claim recites a combination of elements, including, for example, “providing a resist supplying roll of which a surface being coated with a resist”, “contacting and rotating the resist supplying roll on the master to fill the resist in the at least one opening of the master on the etching layer having at least one stepped portion, the master being separated from the substrate at a distance”, and “the master is separated from the hardened resist without any outer impact.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention.

In the claimed invention, the resist supplying roll of which a surface being coated with a resist is provided and the resist supplying roll are contacted and rotated on the surface of the master to transfer the resist on the surface of the resist supplying roll to the opening of the master. However, none of the cited references discloses the resist supplying roll.

Thus, the cited references fail to teach or suggest at least “providing a resist supplying roll of which a surface being coated with a resist” and “contacting and rotating the resist supplying roll on the master to fill the resist in the at least one opening of the master on the etching layer having at least one stepped portion, the master being separated from the substrate at a distance.”

Further, in the claimed invention “the master is separated from the hardened resist without any outer impact.” However, in ‘830 the paste 30 filled to holes of a mask 24 is separated from the mask 24 by a puncher 28 as shown in Figs. 2A and 2B. In Yamuni, a conductive paste 21 filled into holes of plate 25 is separated from the plate 25 by a pressure pin 52 as shown in Fig. 2B. In other word, in ‘830 and Yamuni, the paste or the conductive paste is separate from the mask or plate by the outer impact caused by the puncher or pressure pin.

Thus, the cited references fail to teach or suggest at least “the master is separated from the hardened resist without any outer impact.”

Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that claim 12 is allowable over the cited references.

The rejection of claims 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with ‘830’ along or further in combination with Peek is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Since the rejected claims 14-17 are cancelled, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14-17.

Claims 18 and 19 are allowable at least by virtue of the fact that they depend from claim 12, which is allowable.

Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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